

Creating Innovative Home Economics Classrooms: The Role of the Teacher

Author Details:

Dr (Mrs) B.E Uwameiye-Department of Vocational and Technical Education
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma

Abstracts

This study was conducted to examine the role of the teacher in creating an innovative Home Economics classroom. The study was guided by three research questions. The population consisted of 96 Home Economics teachers in the Edo State of Nigeria. A Questionnaire "RHETCICQ" was utilized for data collection. The data was analyzed using the means score. The mean score was ranked in descending order. The findings revealed that on role of the teacher in the organization of creative Home Economics classrooms; teachers are to act as facilitators, having cordial relationships with students, Introduce technology wisely in Home Economics lessons, encourage collaboration by helping students to work with others and creating a place for all categories of learners during Home Economics lessons. Strategies of teaching; Teachers should utilize new techniques and technologies that are trendy in the Home Economics profession, Integrate technologies common among students to learn in a natural way, integrate technologies common among students so as to make them learn in a natural way and Utilize teaching strategies that are involving and are different from day to day. Qualities of teachers expected in an innovative Home Economics Classrooms : Teachers should be creative and skillful in adapting to the needs of the students, Flexible in adapting to technology, dedicated and tolerant to students, should be involved in lifelong learning and always updating skills. It is recommended that Home Economics teachers should update their skills and appropriate attitude through various self improvement programmes such as in-service training, attending conferences and workshops

Key Words: Home Economics, Adapting, Technology, Innovation, Integration,

Introduction

Education is crucial for a useful living; it dictates the worth of its citizens, and it is also needed for the advancement of the nation. For education to be relevant to the citizen of any nation, it has to meet the rising needs of the society. This led to the introduction of prevocational education in Nigeria. Prevocational education is a purposeful education, which is directed towards skill acquisition. Through the exposure to subjects in prevocational education, students are able to develop a wider perceptive of the industrial and business world, which are towards self-reliance. Among the prevocational subjects in the Nigerian, Junior Secondary School is Agriculture, Business Studies, Basic Technology, and Home Economics.

Molokwu (2007) defined Home Economics as both interdisciplinary and multidiscipline; a field of knowledge with numerous sealable skills that make for self-employment and self-reliance. As a course of study, it occupies an extremely important place in the educational system as an academic discipline that incorporates in its curriculum many life skills that help students to succeed. The knowledge obtained through Home Economics will prove valuable throughout the lifespan of the individual. The most important aspect of a Home Economics programme is that students do not learn about theories alone but skills that will constantly be relevant to the recipients in their entire lives. It takes them through the field of foods and nutrition, clothing and textile and home management.

According to Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) (2007), the objectives of teaching Home Economics at the basic education level are to enable the students to:

- Contribute to a healthy family;
- Develop manipulative skills that will enable the learners to function effectively in the society;
- Develop healthy and aesthetic values, attitudes and skills;

- Develop the ability to adapt to their changing environment;
- Develop a sense of inquiry and scientific approach to daily living and appreciate the dignity of labour.

As impressive as these objectives may seem, Home Economics is not without problems. There are various complaints that the teachings in Home Economics were lifeless, the syllabus is antiquated, and that skills given to students were unrealistic (Ojo, 2007). Also, in the views of Thompson, (2015), a high number of secondary school leavers are not employable, which implies that graduates from these schools are not equipped with the expected saleable skills. If we need improvement in the teaching and learning of this subject, then Home Economics classrooms must be innovative. The solution has to start from being creative in the classroom to increase the level of interest and also give students some sense of belonging. Therefore to meet up with all these and the pace of growth or relevance in today's digital world, Home Economics teachers who are the implementers of the curriculum should be able to initiate innovative ideas, that can elevate the quality of teaching and learning of Home Economics. Akomolafe (2011) stated that Innovation is intentionally bringing into existence something new that can be sustained and repeated which has some value or utility and innovations happen when people recognize the opportunities presented by new tools and technology (Goatley and Johnston, 2013).

Presently, one way of creating innovation is the use of technology, which may be able to increase the students' eagerness for learning. The rationale being that the world is moving at a very fast rate in technological development and it is a new age of digital revolution where virtually all students are computer literate. The emergence of smartphones technology supports the students and teachers' interactions beyond the school environment. The internet, social media such as facebook, blogger, youtube, twitter, Whatsapp, and Instagram are all tools of information communication technology that are available for teaching and learning. This age is called the information age because access to and control of information have become the critical variable in this civilization. Therefore, utilizing technology should be an integral means of learning. This may be able to elicit the interest of young learners and improve their learning outcome. Other ways of creating innovative ideas in the classroom are varying the method of teaching, organizing the class in a unique way from the traditional practice and equipping teachers to meet the needs of the students, to mention but a few.

One of the means of creating innovations in the Home Economics classroom is through an adequate organization. Teachers must recognize that learners are different in several areas such as; social economic background, intellectual differences, and interest differences, consequently teachers must manage the classroom activities to cater to these differences. But Blandow and Dyrenfurth (1994) pointed out that technology is endowed with the potential to manage classroom differences and creating a place for all learners. The Home Economics teacher should be able to provide for all these categories of learners in lesson planning and delivery. This they should do by providing activities that hold, motivate and maintain learner's concentration and attention.

Another way of creating innovation in the Home Economics classroom is by utilizing an appropriate method of teaching. The teacher must utilize instructional techniques that are student centered and not restricted to the subject matter. Methods where students are active and creative, thinkers, motivated, innovative, and operating in team spirit irrespective of the environment. Palawa(2001) reported that teachers should utilize instructional strategies that can motivate learners and engage them towards self-discovery. He further stated that students should have control over time and space. An innovative teacher should also utilize methods that provide students with access to learning resources, able to facilitates teaching and learning activities. Learning in an innovative classroom must be inventive and interactive with peers. Laboratories for teaching should be well equipped having computers equipment for teaching practical lessons. Teachers should be flexible during the evaluation of students.

In addition, an innovative Home Economics Classroom should have a teacher that is also innovative, with adequately prepared lesson plans. The Home Economics teacher should vary lesson plans to suit students' interest. The purpose of teaching is to be able to get ideas to stick and retrievable for use from the memory of students even when outside the classroom. For this to take place, teachers must be inventive in the classroom, accessible to students. A teacher must be innovative towards transforming the traditional practice where teachers are the lord of the classroom. Home Economics teacher is expected to always bring something new to the classroom to raise the interest of students, and in addition, be able to adjust the curricular to suit capabilities of learners (Guri-Rosenblit, Sebkova&Teichler, 2007). The teacher is expected to be able to utilize technological learning materials to teach and engage their students during the learning process for these tools are changing the way students learn in this digital age. As a result, they are expected to be knowledgeable in the use of ICTs with ease. This present generation was born into technology and must be taught with them.

Research Questions

- What is the role of the teacher in the organization of innovative Home Economics classroom in Edo State?
- What are the strategies of teaching in an innovative Home Economics classroom in Edo State?
- What are the qualities of teachers expected in an innovative Home Economics Classrooms in Edo State?

Methodology

Research Design

The research design utilized for this study was a descriptive survey.

Population

The population of the study comprised of the entire 126 teachers teaching Home Economics in the 324 basic secondary schools in the Edo state of Nigeria.

Sampling and Sampling Technique

The simple random sampling technique was utilized in selecting 12 Local Government Areas out of the 18 Local Government Areas in Edo State, utilizing the balloting technique. Then the list of the Home Economics teachers was obtained from the Ministry of Education. Then 7 Home Economics teachers were randomly selected from each local government area yielding a total of 96 teachers that were used for the study.

The instrument of the Study

The instrument utilized for the study was a 28 item self-structured instrument titled "Role of the Home Economics Teacher in Creating an Innovative Classroom Questionnaire"(RHETCICQ). The questionnaire was divided into three sections as follows: Section A:11 items on the role of the teacher in the organization of an innovative Home Economics classrooms. Section B contains 10 items on strategies of teaching in an innovative Home Economics classroom. Section C contains 07 items on qualities of teachers expected in an innovative Home Economics Classrooms. Teachers were required to score each item between 0 and 10 in their order of importance and represent innovation. The scoring order was such that the highest score of 10 was given an innovation that is most innovative in the teaching and learning of Home Economics. While 0 was given to the item that is not very innovative in the teaching and learning of Home Economics.

The validity of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by two experts of Home Economics Education from the department of Vocational and Technical Education. Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. Their criticisms and suggestions were used in the final draft of the instrument. This was done to ensure face and content validity of the instrument. To ensure the reliability of the instrument, copies of the instrument were administered to a group of 20 teachers who were from the Local Government that did not form part of the sampled population. After two weeks, the questionnaire was re-administered. The data were analyzed using the Spearman Brown formula to correlate the data generated. The reliability index of 0.87 was obtained.

Data Collection and Analysis Technique

The researcher administered the questionnaire with the assistance of two research assistants who were familiar with the areas where the research was carried out. 98 copies of the questionnaire were given out and 96 were returned which represented 96.8%. The data gathered from RHETCICQ were analyzed using the mean score as the main statistical tool. The score from each stated innovation was summed up. The mean score was ranked in descending order.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the role of the teacher in the organization of Innovative Home Economics classrooms in Edo State?

Table 1: Mean Score and Rank for Each Role of the Teacher in the Organization of an Innovative Home Economics Classrooms in Edo State

Items	Aggregate Score	Rank
Act as facilitators having cordial relationships with students	620	1
Introduce technology wisely in Home Economics lessons.	555	2
Encourage collaboration by helping students to work with others.	504	3
Creating a place for all categories of learners during Home Economics lessons	521	4
Provide activities that engage, inspire and sustain all students attention	402	5
Help students to believe in their ability to accomplish tasks.	398	6
Invite professionals in Home economics professions for interactions with the students	345	7
Counsel students to increase their interest in Home Economics	321	8
Create a Home Economics classroom that never stops learning.	267	9
Support weak learners in the acquisition of skills in Home Economics practical.	198	10
Encourage strong values to guide the class	44	11

Table 1 indicates that, the first four innovative item indicated by respondents were that teachers are to act as facilitators having cordial relationships with students 620(1), Introduce technology wisely in Home Economics lessons 555(2) encourage collaboration by helping students to work with others 504(3) and creating a place for all categories of learners during Home Economics lessons.

Research Question 2: What are the strategies of teaching in an innovative Home Economics classroom in Edo State?

Table 2: Mean Score and Rank for Strategies of Teaching in an Innovative Home Economics classroom in Edo State

Items	Aggregate Score	Rank
Utilize new techniques and technologies that are trendy in the Home Economics profession	640	1
Integrate technologies common among students to learn in a natural way.	502	2
Utilize spacious laboratories, having tools, and technology.	308	3
Utilize teaching strategies that are involving and are different from day today.	302	4
Utilize methods of teaching that encourage student centre learning	228	5
Engage students with strategies that create an opportunity for revising work done	202	6
Engage students in constant reflection as a class and independently.	188	7

Develop new technologies to answer students questions	110	8
Utilize methods that engage students to think by being creative in the classroom	102	9
Make classroom supporting and comforting by utilizing music and good lighting.	68	10

Table 2 shows that the first four items with the highest mean score are: utilize new techniques and technologies that are trendy in the Home Economics profession 640(1), Integrate technologies common among students to learn in a natural way.504(2), Integrate technologies common among students to learn in a natural way 308(3) and Utilize teaching strategies that are involving and are different from day to day302(4)

Research Question 3: What are the qualities of teachers expected in an innovative Home Economics Classrooms in Edo State?

Table 3; Mean Score and Rank for *Qualities of Teachers Expected in Innovative Home Economics Classroom in Edo State.*

Items	Aggregate Score	Rank
Creative and skillful in adapting to the needs of the students	604	1
Flexible in adapting to technology	508	2
Dedicated and tolerant to students	488	3
Involve in lifelong learning, always updating skills	402	4
Facilitate learning in multiple modalities	208	5
Have Professional relationship with students to gain their trust	188	6
Develop competencies that will allow them to cope with future professional duties	106	7

Table 3 shows that the first four items with the highest mean score are: that the teacher expected in the Home Economics Classroom should be creative and skillful in adapting to the needs of the students , 604 (1), Flexible in adapting to technology 508 (2), Dedicated and tolerant to students 488 (3), Involve in lifelong learning, always updating skills402(4).

Discussion of Findings

This study investigated creating innovative Home Economics classrooms: The role of the teacher. The role of the teacher indicated by respondents was that teachers are to act as facilitators, having cordial relationships with students, Introduce technology wisely in Home Economics lessons, encourage collaboration by helping students to work with others and creating a place for all categories of learners during Home Economics lessons. This indicates that the Home Economics teacher has various roles to play to create innovation in the teaching and learning of Home Economics. This finding is supported by Tapscott (2009) who opined that educators must prepare today's students for change. The traditional era where teachers are feared and students have no access to them is gone. Teachers have to help, counsel and have a cordial relationship with their students. This finding is also corroborated by Davis(2012), who reported that children should be taught to become creators, innovators critical thinkers, problem solvers , communicators and collaborators , The easiest way this can be done is to introduce technology into the teaching and learning process to be able to elicit the student's interest.

Likewise, Imogie (1999) reported that a teacher is to guide the students in securing the amount and quality of experience which will promote the optimum development of their potentials as human beings. This assertion supports the finding that some of the major roles of the teacher are to encourage collaboration by helping students to work with others and creating a place for all categories of learners during Home Economics lessons. Thus, an innovative Home Economics teacher is to be able to guide the students in the provision of innovations in the classroom setting, their activities such as control of instructional delivery, use of technology as management tools to achieve the aims and objectives of the curriculum are all geared towards achieving innovative tendencies among students.

Another finding also shows that respondents agreed that strategies of teaching can be utilized to create innovation in the Home Economics classroom. Thus, the findings indicate that: Home Economics teachers are

expected to utilize new techniques and technologies that are trendy in the Home Economics profession, integrate technologies common among students to learn in a natural way and utilize teaching strategies that are involving and are different from day to day. This is supported by Omodinia, Masron, Selamat (2013) who opined that smart schools are the ones that encourage active thinking process, where the teachers motivate students to learn. If the Home Economics teacher is able to vary his or her methods of teaching, the student's interest will be rekindled in the subject. This is very natural for variety is the spice of life. In addition, the finding also indicates that the teacher has to integrate technologies common among students to learn in a natural way. This is collaborated by Blandow and Dyrenfurth (1994) who pointed out that technology is endowed with the potential to manage classroom differences and create places for all learners in the classroom. The students of this generation are digital natives, therefore will be most excited to participate in any classroom condition where technology is utilized. Technology is the best means of getting the students involved. Temple (2013) opined that schools need to be organized around the work of students, he further stressed that active teaching and learning involves the use of strategies which maximizes opportunities for interaction.

Findings also agreed on these items as qualities of teachers expected in an innovative Home Economics classrooms: that the teachers expected in the Home Economics Classroom should be creative and skillful in adapting to the needs of the students, flexible in adapting to technology, dedicated and tolerant to students needs, Involve in lifelong learning and always updating skills. These findings are supported by Omekwu (2019), who opined that teachers are strategic in the teaching and learning process. Therefore to be able to achieve the goals of learning, Home Economics teachers should exhibit good qualities proportional to student's educational needs.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Home Economics as a subject in schools in Nigeria has continued to face various challenges at various levels in the educational system, to a large extent, the problem is attributable to teachers factors such as methods of lesson delivery and the organization of the classroom. This study on innovative Home Economics classroom: the role of the teacher has been able to proffer a solution to these challenges. Consequently, creating innovations by integrating technology and proper organization of the Home Economics classroom, utilizing appropriate strategies of teaching and having a good quality of teachers will all be beneficial in the Home Economics classrooms. Therefore the following are recommended;

- 1 Home Economics teachers should update their skills and appropriate attitude through various self-improvement programmes to keep abreast with current trends such as in-service training, attending conferences and workshops.
- 2 Home Economics teachers should acquire Information and Communication Technology skills to be able to properly integrate technology into the teaching and learning of the subject.
- 3 The government should equip schools with well qualified Home Economics teachers who are technologically innovative into the secondary schools.
- 4 Government through the Ministry of Education should disseminate knowledge through research findings, new strategy briefing and regular organization of workshop for teachers.

References

- i. Aderogba, A.A(2007). *The use of Information and Communication Thecnology for Quantitative Science education in NigeriaSecondarySchools. Ikere Journal of Education*, 2, 8 – 15.
- ii. Akomolafe, C.O (2011), *Managing Innovations in Educational System in Nigeria: A Focus on Creating and Sustenance of Culture of Innovation. Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies(JETERAPS)*, 2(1): 47-52.

- iii. *BLendow, D, Dyrenfurth, M.J (1994) Technology education in schools and industry; Emergingdiadactics for human resource development. Berlin, Germany, Springer- Verlag in cooperation with NATO. Scientific Affairs Division.*
- iv. *Farah Naz, H.S.M (2017) Innovative Teaching has Positive impact on the performance of diverse Students*
- v. *Imogie, A.I(1999) Do you Know Who is Teaching your Child. Inaugural Lecture Series 53. University of Benin. Benin City.Pg 4 -5.*
- vi. *Davis,K.C (2012) The Effects of Technology Instruction on the Academic Achievement of Fifth Grade Students. A dissertation Presented to Liberty University. Retrieved 16th February, 2013.Http://www.goggle.com.*
- vii. *GoatleyV.j and Johnston (2013) Innovation Research and Policy Evolution in Classroom Teaching. Language Arts, Volume 91 (2)94 -104*
- viii. *Guri-Rosenblit, S, Sebkova, H. , &Teichler, U., (2007).Massification and Diversity of Higher Education system; Interplay of complex Dimension. Higher Education Policy, 20,373-389*
- ix. *Molokwu, N.(2004).The Challenges of Reducing Poverty in Nigeria; Repositioning Home Economics for Sustainable Education. Being a Lead Paper Presented at the 8th Annual Conference of Home Economics Annual Research Association of Nigeria. UNN.Sept 5 -8.*
- x. *Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC,2007). 9- Year Basic Education Curriculum Home Economics for Junior Secondary School 1-3.Abuja, Nigeria.*
- xi. *Ojo, A.K (2007).The Effect of the Sensitized Teaching on Student's Acquisition of Home Economics Practical Skills, Attitudes and Cognitive Achievement. A Thesis Dissertation, University of Benin. Unpublished.*
- xii. *Omekwu, C.O.(2019) Smart Schools : New Frontiers for Education in Digital Age.*
- xiii. *Faculty of Education, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma.5thDistinguished Guest Lecture.May, 14th 2019.*
- xiv. *Omidinia S, Masron, M, Selamat, H.(2013)An Examination of the Concept of Smart School: An innovation to Address Sustainability. 2nd International Conference on Advances in Computer Science and Engineering Available at <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/An->*
- xv. *Paliwala, A (2001) "Learning in cyber space " The journal of information, law and technology(JILT). Available at <http://lelj.warwick.ac.uk/jilt/01-1/paliwala.html>.*
- xvi. *Thompson,J (2015) "Poor grades" Inside Higher Ed, July 9 Available at www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/poll-find-overall-dissatisfaction-college-selection-process-while-parents. (accessesedAugust 20,2016)*
- xvii. *Tapscott, D.(2009).Grown up digital: How the Next Generation is Changing your World.*
- xviii. *Temple .T. (2013) Focusing on students success: Assesment of learning outcomes in blended environments. Paper Presented at the Lily Conference on College and University Teaching. Greensboro, NC.*